

GI SPECIAL 3B2:

SO MUCH FOR THE HAPPY TALK: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



The Day Publishing Co., 2005

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Amazing! Somebody Finally Noticed!

4.16.05 By Luke Baker, (Reuters) & THE WASHINGTON POST

The resurgence of the type of violence that has been so common in Iraq for the past two years has raised concerns that militants are regrouping after a period of relative quiet.

Days ago, some Iraqi and U.S. officials had spoken hopefully of breaking the insurgency. [Example: Christian Science Monitor, April 15, 2005, "U.S. forces appear to be making headway in their battle against entrenched insurgency in Iraq."]

On Thursday, after days of deadlier-than-normal attacks and the first kidnapping of an American contractor in months, some Iraqi officials already were talking about emerging from false complacency.

Asked if the insurgency had a much longer run ahead of it, the senior U.S. military official said, "Historically, the answer has to be yes.

"Because I think the average insurgency lasts about eight, nine or 10 years, something along those lines," said the official, speaking to reporters in Baghdad on condition of anonymity. "So we're two years into this thing. History would tell us yes."

"Do I know whether it's going to be three years, five years, seven years, nine years, 15 years? No. I don't think anybody can tell you that. Insurgencies aren't normally short-lived."

[As usual, this "senior U.S. military official" gives no thought to the fact that troops can have something to say about how long an Imperial war of occupation goes on. When the army rebelled against the same kind of Imperial occupation in Vietnam, all the bullshit about how the war would go on for X or Y numbers of years went right out the window, and the troops came home. Time to do that again.

[Otherwise the military official has it right, the war goes on forever.

[How could it be otherwise?

[The Iraqis live there. It's their country. They're fighting for their freedom from foreign rule. They won't stop until they win. Just like the Vietnamese. Who fought for 30 years and could have done another 30, having, like the Iraqis, only about 3000 years history, tradition & experience of warfare against foreign invading armies. Case closed. T]

Task Force Liberty Soldier Killed By Indirect Fire Near Tikrit

4.16.05 mnf *Release #050416d*

One Task Force Liberty Soldier was killed when a Coalition Force base was attacked by indirect fire at about 8:00 p.m. on April 15. The Soldier, who was evacuated to a Coalition medical facility, died of wounds sustained in the attack.

The attack occurred near Tikrit in the Province of Salah AD Din.

IED-Wounded Soldier Dies

4.16.05 mnf Release #050416e, BAGHDAD, Iraq

A Soldier from the 42nd Military Police Brigade died of wounds received at about 11 a.m. April 16 when an IED exploded on a convoy of uparmored vehicles.

The attack happened near Taji, north of Baghdad.

MP Killed Near Taji

4.16.05 Baltimore Sun

One soldier, from the 42nd Military Police Brigade, was wounded and died when his convoy was hit by an explosive device near Taji, 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of Baghdad.

Resistance Active In Falluja: “There Have Been More Attacks In Recent Weeks” “It Remains... A Focal Point Of The Insurgency" Marine Officer Says: Another Marine Wounded

14 April, 2005 By Andrew North, BBC News, Falluja

The reality is that Falluja is still far from settled or secure.

At a US marine base in the city, troops from the unit come under fire late one evening.

A support team is quickly scrambled. By past standards, it turns out to be a minor incident in which one marine is injured. [Not very fucking “minor” for the Marine.]

But there have been more attacks in recent weeks.

The signs are that as more people return home, more insurgents are coming back, too.

Captain Rob Hancock is the unit's commander.

"It's not the dangerous place it was back in November or December but it remains... a focal point of the insurgency," he says.

"They got their nose bloodied pretty bad here and they definitely want to show that they're still strong."

Later the same night, he briefs his marines for a raid to catch two suspected insurgents. The plan is to try to persuade them to come out through force of numbers.

Through loudspeakers, an interpreter orders people in the first house to come out with their hands up.

"Drop your weapons - you're surrounded by massive military force," the voice continues. It's 0400 in the morning.

A man comes out of the gate of the house with his hands in the air. There are about 10 to 15 marines immediately around the gate, and now another five or so have moved up closer - weapons raised and ready.

The family is distraught. There is no struggle as the men are taken away to a US-run detention centre.

It is another reminder of how fragile things remain here, despite the toughest security measures anywhere in Iraq. **There are checks on every person and vehicle trying to enter the city, which take hours to get through.**

Such measures also inhibit reconstruction, acknowledges Colonel Mark Gurganus, the US marine commander for Falluja.

"Those are things that we're working on very hard to streamline the process. **But we're still going to maintain a relatively tight security posture until we have a few more of the bad actors off the streets.**" [Try 80% of the adult population of Iraq.]

Mosul Car Bomb Wounds Six U.S. Troops

4.16.05 Baltimore Sun & (Xinhuanet)

In the northern city of Mosul, a car bomb damaged one vehicle in a U.S. military convoy, wounding six soldiers lightly, said Sgt. John H. Franzen. The attack came as Iraqi and U.S. forces were completing two days of raids in and around Mosul that led to the detention of 27 suspected insurgents, the military said in a statement.

Humvee Hit In Baghdad



Iraqis gather around a damaged Humvee after a car bomb targeted a U.S. Army patrol in Baghdad April 15, 2005. (AP Photo/Hadi Mizban)

Ellenville Marine Critically Wounded

April 16, 2005 By Paul Brooks, Times Herald-Record

Ellenville – Angela and Chris Ryan are at the side of their critically wounded son, Marine Cpl. Ed Ryan, in a military hospital in Germany.

"They are where they should be," said Ryan's uncle, Tony Puccio of Ulster Heights. "But what can they do but pray and hope he will recover?"

Ryan was hit with a bullet in his brain sometime Tuesday night in Iraq.

Ryan was serving his second tour of duty with the Marines, Puccio said.

**“Senior Military Official” In Deep
Shit -- Tells The Truth:
Bush, Rumsfeld & Co. Lying About
“Foreign Fighters” Leading Iraq
Resistance**

[For two years the traitors running the war have been raving about how Iraqis love the occupation, and it's just those nasty foreign fighters leading some silly Iraqis to fight back. Have some truth. The foreign fighters entering and wrecking Iraq are under the command of George W. Bush, and have had more than enough of it.]

4/16/2005 United Press International

The U.S. military is detaining hundreds of foreign fighters in Iraq representing 25 countries, a senior U.S. military official said Friday in Baghdad.

Still, the vast majority of insurgents are Iraqis.

"We've got, oh, roughly 10,800 -- give or take -- prisoners. I think there are like 357, 358, something like that, third-country nationals, *some of whom have been in Iraq for many, many years,*" the senior official said. [That comes to 3%!]

Almost half are from Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iran, the official said; there are roughly 50 from each of the three countries.

The Iranian fighters are likely Shi'ites but are fighting alongside the largely Sunni insurgency, joining up with Ansar al Islam/Ansar al Sunnah in northern Iraq, the official said.

"None of these, I would say, are state sponsored by any stretch of the imagination," the official said.

TROOP NEWS

OOPS

"If I Can Go To The U.S. Army And Fight The War At 18, Why Can't You Play Basketball For 48 Minutes And Then Go Home?"

[Thanks to Desmond, who sent this in.]

April 12, 2005 By Mike Wells, Gannett Indiana

TORONTO -- Indiana Pacers forward Jermaine O'Neal is not happy there could be a higher age limit for NBA players in the next collective bargaining agreement.

"In the last two or three years, the Rookie of the Year has been a high school player," O'Neal said before Monday's game against Toronto. "There were seven high school players in the All-Star game, so why we even talking (about) an age limit?"

Cleveland's LeBron James and Phoenix's Amare Stoudemire, both players who made the jump straight from high school, have won the past two Rookie of the Year awards.

O'Neal, who is trying to return from a shoulder injury, made the jump from high school to the NBA in 1996. He didn't flourish until being traded to the Pacers in 2000.

NBA commissioner David Stern wants to raise the minimum age for the NBA draft from 18 to 20. O'Neal said he would be willing to listen to arguments for raising the age limit.

O'Neal hinted that race is a factor.

"As a black guy, you kind of think (race is) the reason why it's coming up," O'Neal said.

"You don't hear about it in baseball or hockey. To say you have to be 20, 21 to get in the league, it's unconstitutional. If I can go to the U.S. Army and fight the war at 18, why can't you play basketball for 48 minutes and then go home?"

MORE:

Straight Outta High School:

April 15, 2005 By Dave Zirin, edgeofsports.com

As part of the "No Child Left Behind Act," high schools are required under penalty of law to hand over student phone lists to U.S. military recruiters.

The armed forces believe that children as young as 14 should consider a career traveling to far away places, guarding oil pipe lines, and killing people . But NBA commissioner David Stern contends that 18 and 19 year olds may be able to vote, work a shift at Abu Ghraib, and watch Sin City, but they have no place in his league.

The worst kept secret in sports is that Stern is demanding an NBA age rule, requiring players to be 20 years old to play pro ball. Jermaine O'Neal simply wants to know why.

After a game in Toronto last week, the Indiana Pacers forward was asked a blissfully simple question about Stern's power play. A Canadian reporter, clearly dazed from medical marijuana and national health care, queried, "Is it because you guys are Black that the league is trying to put an age limit on the draft?"

O'Neal, maybe because he was feeling the cool breezes of social democracy, responded freely, without a censor, without a filter, and without approval from his sneaker company.

He said, "In the last two years, the rookie of the year has a been a high school player. There were seven high school players in the All-Star game, so why we even talking an age limit? **As a black guy, you kind of think that's the reason why it's coming up. You don't hear about it in baseball or hockey. To say you have to be 20, 21 to get in the league, it's unconstitutional. If I can go to the U.S. army and fight the war at 18, why can't you play basketball for 48 minutes?"**

Now the harpies of sports radio have descended upon O'Neal like he tipped over the Pope's coffin in Vatican City. He has been called stupid. He has been told to "just shut up." He has basically been treated like Joseph Massad at a JDL meeting. All of this because he spoke a truth that made much of the US sports media squirm.

But it was a question that needed to be asked. 76% of NBA players are African-American. But the percentage of players who came right out of High School that are Black is more like 99.9% (the one exception ever: Seattle's Rob Swift).

In other words, a policy is being proposed that will hurt the ability of young Black men to make a living. Is this racist? There is no similar clamor for baseball, soccer or hockey leagues to stop drafting high schoolers.

The army sure isn't shutting down their High School recruitment booths around the country. No age restrictions are coming down the pike to prevent Dakota Fanning from acting or Ashlee Simpson from singing (although legislation on the latter is a necessity). And yet the NBA calls for change.

The arguments in defense of Stern's proposal have more holes than a Dunkin Donuts. Steve Kerr wrote, "So why is David Stern interested in an age limit? To improve the NBA's product; a better product on and off the court." A better product "on and off the court"? Would the league be a better product without instant sensations LeBron James and Amare Stoudamire? Even considering players who have taken longer to develop like O'Neal himself or Tracy McGrady, it's the team's decision to draft "potential" over immediate dividends, and the player's right at 18 to try and make a living.

But the proof that the product isn't damaged is in the ticket sales. The league is in an economic renaissance largely on the strength of these very straight outta high school players. As O'Neal said, "The product and economic reasons can't be the reason, because the league is doing well and the prime faces of the NBA are of high-school players. So why are they trying to change that? It doesn't make sense to me."

The other Stern argument is that players who come straight out of high school are "unprepared" and they need "the guidance and discipline" of college life to ready them for the NBA. Anyone thinks the life of a college athlete breeds "discipline" has turned a blind eye to the University of Colorado's "hooker slush fund" program or Maurice Clarett's exposure of Ohio State as a place where apple cheeked boosters stuff \$100 bills in your pocket for playing x-box with their kids.

But even beyond this ridiculous view of college as a Buddhist Temple of austere discipline, there is a paternalism to this statement that these young Black men need a father figure (often white father figure) to set them on the right track.

As one columnist wrote in defense of raising the age limit, "Perhaps Kobe Bryant would have dealt with adversity in a more positive manner had he spent a season or two playing for Mike Kryzwewski at Duke."

Yes, a season or two of god-status amongst the preppy wealth of Cameron Crazies, and some fatherly pats on the head from Coach K in between American Express commercial shoots would have altered his entire path. Christian Laettner, numerous drug suspensions and failed NBA career aside, is a testament to the St. Assisi-like powers of Coach K.

The fact is that O'Neal is right.

There is no economic reason, no reason with regard to the quality of play, and no reason with regard to the stunting of talent, which justifies Stern's move. That leaves race.

Stern is simply expressing in policy the long held concerns by NBA executives that a league whose base of talent are America's bogeyman, the YBT (Young Black Teenager) is unsustainable. In other words, as Steve Kerr alluded to, the concerns are "off the court": image, marketability, and concerns that the league is too "hip-hop."

As Brian Burwell wrote in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "(NBA marketing people) thought they were getting Will Smith and LL Cool J. But now they've discovered the dark side of hip-hop has also infiltrated their game, with its 'bling-bling' ostentation, its unrepentant I-gotta-get-paid ruthlessness, its unregulated culture of posses, and the constant underlying threat of violence." The Tampa Bay Tribune wrote a whole piece about how "hip hop" was "alienating" older fans. All of this is ideological cover for racism and discomfort with seeing young Black men fronting a billion dollar enterprise.

The message is that young Black men are good enough to die in Iraq, but not good enough to play ball. This - no matter how you dress it up - is racism, and far from stupid, O'Neal has every right to raise this and be heard.

As journalist Scoop Jackson wrote, "Let's define stupid. Stupid is Barry Bonds still working out with Greg Anderson. Stupid is Mike Tyson still fighting for a title shot. Stupid is the Lakers not getting at least one All-Star in return for Shaq.

An NBA superstar finding something racially motivated when the principals involved are specifically of one race? That's not stupid. That's conscious."

Propaganda Toward The Right?

4.18.05

Letters To The Editor
Army Times

For the past few months, I have noticed that base exchanges and bookstores sell only anti-liberal or anti-Democrat books, such as “How to Talk to a Liberal (If You Must)” or “Unfit for Command.” Is this not propaganda toward the right?

I wrote a letter to the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and received no response.

I have been in the military for five years and have found that senior leadership tends to push junior servicemen toward the Republican side. I find that disheartening.

For example, during last year’s election, whenever service members talked about why they voted for President Bush instead of Sen. John Kerry, more than 70 percent of the time they said, “Democrats hate the military” or “Republicans give us more money.”

This is what junior soldiers are being told, and it angers me that they don’t take the time to learn who they really side with, since most junior servicemen have more democratic beliefs anyway.

Marine Cpl. Victor Rodriguez
Camp Lejeune, N.C.

[The slant is especially dimwitted because Kerry was just as dedicated to Imperial USA and keeping the war in Iraq going as any Republican. Democrats yield to none in their commitment to killing off U.S. troops for no good reason, witness Kerry’s demand to send 40,000 more troops to Iraq. T]

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

Dump The Gay Policy

4.18.05
Letters To The Editor
Army Times

Finally, someone dared to frame the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy in its fundamental context: the genius of democracy, where every citizen counts.

Having spent nine years of my life at West Point — as a cadet, a former associate professor and then aide to its superintendent — I am proud of Lt. Col. Allen Bishop's courage (“Gays in the military: It’s a question of liberty,” Back Talk, March 14) in upholding the U.S. Military Academy’s values of duty, honor, country.

He fulfilled the obligation we all have of honorably defending the rights of all citizens and speaking out against prejudice. He noted our ability to overcome former legal biases against women and minorities, and he’s pointing us at the injustice of this policy .

Hopefully, the prime defenders of our country’s inalienable rights, equality and justice will heed his call and the lead the way to freedom to serve for all.

Col. Stewart Bornhoft (ret.)

OOPS 2



On 3 November activists got inside RAF Welford in Berkshire, one of the largest bomb-stores in Europe, hanging banners saying "No War" and "Stop Bombing Kids" and chalking the words "Hands off Fallujah on the munitions." (photo: Voices UK) [Thanks to JM, who sent this in.]

South Korean Government Tells Bush To Fuck Off; Won't Give U.S. Control Of Their Army

April 15, 2005 Associated Press, SEOUL, South Korea

South Korea has turned down Washington's request to draw up joint military plans against North Korea in case of emergencies, according to a news report Friday.

South Korea's National Security Council earlier this year rejected U.S. calls for a contingency plan, which would include a range of military responses against Pyongyang in the event of regime change or mass defections, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported.

The Security Council said the plans would have "severely" limited South Korea's sovereignty, Yonhap reported.

Under the proposal, the United States would have been in command of both American and South Korean troops in case an emergency happened in the North, according to Yonhap.

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Resistance Action



Three policemen were killed in an explosion at a restaurant in the town of Baquba. The restaurant, popular with policemen, was packed with diners when the bomb went off. (AFP/Ali Yussef)

April 16, 2005 Agence France-Presse & Times Of Oman & AP & FOCUS News Agency & (KUNA) & By Luke Baker, (Reuters)

Insurgents killed three members of Iraq's security forces on Saturday by firing from speeding vehicles at army soldiers and policemen in the northern city of Kirkuk, officials said.

The resistance fighters killed one policeman and two soldiers as they headed to work in two separate drive-by shootings, police Brig. Sarhat Qadir said.

The policeman was killed as he headed home in the eastern part of the town, Colonel Anwar Abdallah said.

The soldiers, part of a guard detail for a senior officer, were targeted in the south of the city, Colonel Adel Zeinabbedin said.

A policeman was also killed overnight by a bomb in Tuz, near Tikrit, north of Baghdad, while a member of an oil protection force was killed in a clash with suspected insurgents in Baiji.

An Iraqi soldier was killed and another wounded overnight in an explosion in the Al-Mutassim area near Samarra.

Baquba: Seven Iraqis, including three policemen, were killed in an explosion at a restaurant in the town of Baquba, north of Baghdad, AFP reported citing Iraqi army sources. At least five were reportedly injured. The restaurant, popular with policemen, was packed with diners when the bomb went off.

An Iraqi police source said two Iraqis were wounded in northeastern Baghdad when an explosive device targeting a US patrol vehicle blew up.

Insurgents shot and killed police officer Mohammed Habib Ali in the center of Kut, 160 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of Baghdad, police said.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**

Resistance Consolidating In Salman Pak Area

4.16.05 By Luke Baker, (Reuters)

In recent weeks, U.S. and Iraqi forces have been caught up in several ambushes in Salman Pak, adjacent to Madaen. Insurgents have built up a strong presence in the area, the site of weapons factories during Saddam Hussein's rule.

Military Supply Truck Driver Killed

April 16, 2005 Agence France-Presse & Turks.US

A Turkish trucker has been killed. The bomb went off in the Eyci vicinity a few miles north of the oil refining town of Baiji, some 200 kilometers north of Baghdad and the truck, said to be transporting goods for the US military, was set on fire.

Eleven Detainees Briefly Liberate Selves From Iraqi Prison

April 16, 2005 The Associated Press, BAGHDAD, Iraq

The military says that eleven detainees have escaped from an Iraqi prison, but ten are believed to have already been captured.

One detained prisoner says the group escaped through a hole in the fence that surrounds the Camp Bucca prison. The detention center is the largest in Iraq.

Officials will not say why the prisoners are being detained.

The Political Platform And Organizational Structure Of The Iraqi Resistance

April 14, 2005 Mothanna Harith Al-Dhari , Al-Ahram Weekly (Egypt). *Al-Dhari is the spokesperson of the Muslim Scholars Association. The above article is based on a lecture given by him this week at the Cairo-based International Centre for Future and Strategic Studies.*

Two years after the US invasion of Iraq, Mothanna Harith Al-Dhari takes stock of the Muslim Scholars Association's championing of resistance:

It is impossible to examine Iraq's future options without taking the views of the Muslim Scholars' Association (MSA) into account. The MSA opposed the occupation when few had the foresight to do so.

As early as 18 July 2003, the MSA organised a gathering to voice opposition to the then Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). The gathering concluded that the IGC was dividing the nation along ethnic and sectarian lines, fuelling factional sentiments in the country and undermining national unity.

The MSA's denunciation of the IGC publicised its work. **As a consequence the MSA held meetings with the Arab League and various groups in neighbouring states during which it asserted its opposition to occupation and outlined Iraq's strategic and tactical options.**

Over the past two years the MSA has made it clear that the occupation must end soon, for it is the occupation that has undermined the fabric of society in Iraq and shaken the institutions of the Iraqi state.

Normalcy is inconceivable until the occupation is over. Below is a brief account of what the MSA has done in the course of the past two years.

The occupation authorities wanted to hold elections in Iraq as early as 2004, then ditched the idea. During this phase the MSA issued a statement saying that it "does not hold much store by the elections or other schemes suggested for the transfer of power so long as the occupation continues and the nation is deprived from exercising its will freely".

The MSA then proceeded to hold closed dialogues with like-minded groups in the country. It was the agreement among these groups that provided the backdrop for the proposed Iraqi National Constitutive Council (INCC).

The INCC, formed on 8 May 2004, provided a platform through which national groups opposed to the occupation could speak their mind, express their national preferences, refute pro-occupation arguments and denounce those working closely with the occupation authorities.

The MSA was instrumental in drafting the Charter of Understanding and National Work, endorsed by the INCC.

The Charter contained 14 national and pan- Arab demands, among the most relevant being: commitment to the unity of Iraq's land, people, and sovereignty, as well as the rejection of any attempt to divide the country along ethnic or confessional lines; rejection of laws issued under occupation and of any attempt to dispose of Iraq's natural, financial and human resources without the consent of an elected national authority; the rehabilitation of national armed forces and the disbanding of all existing militias and the supremacy of the law in a country committed to political, economic, and social reconstruction.

The INCC's work culminated in the forming of the Delegation of the National Forces Resisting Occupation (DNFRC).

The DNFRC toured Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan to present a national agenda offering an alternative to occupation. The DNFRC met the secretary-general of the Arab League on 8 December 2004 to discuss that agenda and present an alternative path to the political process then underway in Iraq.

The delegation proposed a broad-based national front of all parties and political groups be formed to defend national principles, end the occupation, safeguard the country's unity, sovereignty and independence, uphold justice, equity,

democracy, pluralism, human rights and sustainable development, guarantee the religious, cultural, civic and political rights of all Iraqis and combat all forms of ethnic, sectarian and religious discrimination.

The broad-based national front then formed an expanded committee to formulate a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq and to restore Iraq's full sovereignty and independence in a complete and decisive manner supported by international guarantees.

It called for an interim government of technocrats selected on the basis of patriotism, efficiency and willingness to serve the country that would act under the supervision of the expanded committee, and suggested that a constitutional committee be chosen to prepare an interim constitution to be submitted to the broad-based national front for approval.

It recommended a timetable be set for a population census that would be followed by general elections producing an interim government and legislative council.

These two bodies would then prepare the permanent constitution which would then be voted on in a referendum, with both bodies being disbanded as soon as the executive and legislative authorities are elected in accordance with the permanent constitution. **All laws approved or issued by the occupation authorities or by Iraqi institutions created under occupation would, furthermore, become nil and void once the occupation ends.**

The national front and interim government would issue the laws and legislation needed to run the country in the interim phase and until such time that elected Iraqi institutions are formed in coordination with the expanded committee.

The above are the options the MSA presented to the nation, the focus being on ending the occupation since it is the occupation that has caused the disintegration of Iraq as a state.

In other words, Iraq must assert national unity as a means of building the state and keeping it together; conduct the political process on a sound basis and away from the intervention of the occupation authorities and rehabilitate security institutions so they can keep law and order.

Security concerns have been emphasised in Iraq at the expense of all other aspects of reconstruction. And yet the security services are clearly flawed, for reasons connected with the occupation under which they were put together. This is a serious problem which impedes the process of reconstruction.

The MSA's views of Iraq's options are shared by many across the political and ideological spectrum.

There is ample ground for agreement, and yet occupation remains a thorny issue.

When it comes to occupation the MSA sees no room for compromise.

No one is going to convince us that occupation is good for the country, not after the experience we've had with the interim government and the now-disbanded IGC. Iraq's future as a viable country is at stake.

The probity of the political process has been compromised in a manner that disregards the country's future. The rehabilitation of the security services has been conducted in a questionable manner. As a result national unity is at risk. The gap is still wide between people who are active on Iraq's political scene and those, such as the MSA, who oppose the occupation.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

Good Guys & Bad Guys

April 14, 2005 Aaron Glantz, AntiWar.com

Sean Langan is a documentary filmmaker with the BBC who spent months reporting both embedded and unembedded in Fallujah.

He told me that the more the U.S. cracks down on the insurgency, the more it grows. And, he says, that's not good for the troops.

"Many of these guys back home would be the good guys," he said.

"They would be the guys who would help out in the community, and yet finding themselves in a town like Fallujah where they are getting shot at every day, they ended up as the bad guys.

"The nice guys and good guys were then the same guys who would shout abuse at the Iraqi civilians and run cars off the road. Whatever kind of guy you are, you end up in a difficult, no-win situation."

[No. You don't "end up" by magic in a difficult, no-win situation. Somebody puts you there. In this case, the corporate assholes running the U.S. government put you there, for their benefit, and nobody else's' benefit.

[That is not an accident.

[And then they blame the troops who snap. Old story. Some of the troops who rebelled in Vietnam, and finally stopped the war, were the same troops who had committed atrocities before they saw the truth.

[Blame the politicians and the corporate interests that buy the politicians, devise the Imperial wars and spread the lies that cover up what's really going on. Take them on. They can and will be brought down, and made to pay for every life,

American and Iraqi, that has been thrown away in this stupid, fucked up, hopeless Imperial disaster. Love the soldier; hate the war. Hate the war politicians, Democrat and Republican alike, and the war profiteers. As Malcolm X once said, "If blood must be spilled, let it be theirs." T]

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

OCCUPATION REPORT

**RALLY BAD PLACE TO BE:
BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW**



(KUNA)

“Trust Me”

May 2, 2005 JIM MCGOVERN, The Nation

"Trust me when I tell you things are so much better in Iraq," said one US military official to me on my recent visit to that war-ravaged country.

I was in Iraq as part of a delegation of eight members of Congress, led by House minority leader Nancy Pelosi.

We were in Iraq for one day--for security reasons, it is US policy that Congressional delegations are not allowed to spend the night. We spent most of our time in the heavily fortified Green Zone, which serves as coalition headquarters. It's the most heavily guarded encampment I've ever seen--and it still gets attacked.

One military leader told us they can tell that things are changing for the better because when US helicopters fly over certain areas of Iraq, Iraqis wave. Well, I took a helicopter ride (it's too dangerous to drive) from the Baghdad airport to the Green Zone wearing an armored vest and sandwiched between two heavily armed American soldiers who were pointing their guns down at the ground.

I suggested to the military leader that perhaps he was confusing a wave with a plea not to shoot.

“Who Exactly Are The Insurgents?”

Riverbend: "Embedded" In Baghdad, Telling It Like It Is

Resistance is coming from various sources -- former Iraqi army people, Islamists, Ba'athists, nationalists and ordinary people who hate this new way of life Iraqis are being relegated to.

April 15, 2005 BUZZFLASH INTERVIEW

"Riverbend" is a storyteller. Her "Baghdad Burning" blog is one part Anne Frank, another part Scheherazade and "A Thousand and One Arabian Nights" -- from cyberspace. As she wrote in her first weblog entry, dated August 17, 2003: "So this is the beginning for me, I guess ... expect a lot of complaining and ranting. ... A little bit about myself: I'm female, Iraqi and 24. I survived the war. That's all you need to know. It's all that matters these days anyway."

BuzzFlash: One thing about your blog that has struck us is your frequent references to the Governing Council as American puppets. That, because the majority of the Governing Council members have not lived in Iraq for a long time, they are not viewed by most Iraqis as representatives of Iraq. Is this viewpoint aired in the Arab press? How and how often? This perspective is rarely, if ever, seen in the mainstream media in the United States.

Riverbend: It's not so much that these people have been living abroad for such long periods of time, it's because these people did so many things over the years to prove they never really wanted the welfare of the Iraqi people.

It's difficult to view someone like Chalabi as Iraqi when he was living in luxury abroad all his life and simultaneously encouraging the blockade on Iraq, helping plan a war, riding in on occupation tanks and cheering on foreign troops while the country is pillaged and burned.

People who have lived in Iraq their entire lives are also seen as puppets when they cooperate with occupation people. The Arab media doesn't often portray them as puppets because, let's face it, many Arab leaders themselves are American puppets -- the Jordanian and Saudi royals, for example, and we really do have very few truly free media networks or newspapers in the Arab world.

BuzzFlash: You often state that, among Iraqis, there is a strong sense of nationhood that supercedes ethnic or religious differences. You point out that your family is a fairly typical Iraqi family in that it includes members of various ethnic and religious groups. But isn't Iraq, as a nation, an artificial construct created by Western powers at the end of the last colonial era?

Riverbend: I think many Iraqis don't care so much about how the nation was formed as they do about it remaining a united country.

Iraq has a long and rich history and historically, people of different religions and ethnicities have been very able to live together in peace. The important thing to us right now is that we remain united as one country. We've been able to live together, Sunnis, Shia and Kurds, in the past -- it shouldn't be any different now. Though the language may differ in some places, we share similar cultures and beliefs -- there is nothing that should stand in the way of internal peace and unity.

I know for a fact that the majority of Iraqis don't like being labeled as Sunni, Shia or Kurd. These labels are being promoted by the current new government and the Bush administration and many Iraqis believe they are being used to divide and conquer.

BuzzFlash: Who exactly are the insurgents? The White House and the American press lump them all together. We guess that it keeps it simple for them that way. But from what we can deduce from the foreign press, the resistance to the American occupation is coming from a variety of sources. Can you speculate as to how many different groups are attacking American forces, as well as soldiers in the Iraqi Army, Iraqi police and Iraqi civilians? To what extent are the bombings and attacks due to Sunni/Shiite jockeying for power?

Riverbend: The White House makes it very simple when talking about the insurgency -- foreign, Islamic terrorists. It's hardly that simple.

I guess most Iraqis believe there is resistance and there is terror. Resistance is coming from various sources -- former Iraqi army people, Islamists, Ba'athists, nationalists and ordinary people who hate this new way of life Iraqis are being relegated to.

Terror is also coming from various sources and in many cases it is a complete mystery. Many people believe the attacks against the police force and security forces are the work of outsiders or people who want Iraqis to hate the resistance.

It's difficult to tell at this point just what is going on. Some attacks are meant to cause sectarian violence between Sunnis and Shia, but those are quite easy to see through (for example the bombing of Sunni mosques or Shia Husseiniyas) and Iraqis have proven over the last two years that they are far too tolerant to fall for such underhanded techniques.

BuzzFlash: You are obviously a secular Iraqi, with great skills of observation in writing in English. You are also an independent, thinking young woman. Do you have fears of a fundamentalist Islamic takeover of the Iraqi government?

Riverbend: I have fears of fundamentalism of any type. I fear Sunni fundamentalism and Shia fundamentalism. I fear we might be slowly working our way towards a state run by Mullahs and clerics. **I fear Iraq being turned into another Iran by parties like Da'awa and SCIRI, currently being promoted by the occupation powers.**

It is not Islam that I fear -- I am a Muslim and a practicing one -- it is the deformation of Islam practiced in places like Iran and Saudi Arabia that I fear.

BuzzFlash: The American military successfully kept reporters from describing what was clearly a devastating assault on Fallujah, as well as some other cities. But, again, from reading the foreign press, it appears Fallujah was decimated and that countless civilians were killed. Do you have any information on Fallujah or other cities that the American military assaulted without allowing the media to cover their activities?

Riverbend: Many cities are assaulted by the military without proper press coverage.

The latest is Qaim, for example. There has been a siege and assault that has lasted several days already. Last week it was Haditha and Mash'had. We know things are not going well in these areas when we get refugees in Baghdad -- often women and children of men who have been detained for no reason or killed.

Very few media sources are actually covering it, and the only casualties discussed are the deaths of 'insurgents' and 'terrorists.' Very few media outlets report about the deaths of women and children -- only when they are caused by roadside bombs or terrorists. Even Arab news networks aren't reporting casualties like before.

BuzzFlash: A study in the British journal, "The Lancet," which was largely ignored by the American press, indicated that possibly more than 100,000 Iraqis have been killed since the American invasion. Do you think this might be accurate?

Riverbend: I'm sure more than 100,000 people have died in the last two years.

Everyone literally knows more than one person who died -- often a relative or a friend. We have people dying of bombs, dying under torture, dying of malnutrition, a lack of shelter, missiles, attacks, abductions, etc. We have illnesses emerging that Iraqis hadn't even heard of in the past -- cancer rates have gone up drastically and in some areas we hear about cholera or typhoid. **It's difficult to know just how many people have died**

because the Ministry of Health was given explicit instructions about not keeping tabs.

BuzzFlash: The Bush White House and their representatives keep saying it was all worth it to get rid of Saddam Hussein. We think there might have been other ways of getting rid of Saddam Hussein besides wrecking a nation and taking over its oil. What do you think?

Riverbend: I think this wasn't about the welfare of Iraqi people and ridding them of a dictator. I think this has been about the US strategically placing itself in a Middle Eastern 'hot spot' -- in the middle of Turkey, Iran, Syria and the Gulf countries -- to wreak havoc and promote instability in the area, and have direct access to the oil, of course.

Democracy has to come from within and it has to be a request of the people -- not of expatriates who have alliances with the CIA and British intelligence. People have to want something enough to rise up and change it. They have to be ready for democracy and willing to accept its responsibility. The US could have promoted democracy in Iraq peacefully, but then they wouldn't have permanent bases in the country, would they?

OCCUPATION HAITI

NOMINEE FOR IMPERIAL PROPAGANDA AWARD: 2005



“Brutus Gerardo, 26, explains how a bullet grazed his head during a clash between UN *peacekeepers* and *gang members* Friday, in Cite Soleil a slum in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, April 16, 2005. The fighting killed at least five and perhaps as many as 10 *suspects* described as *members of an armed band loyal to deposed*

President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, U.N. officials said.” (AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos; writer of text not identified.)

[The U.S. Imperial government engineers the overthrow by force and violence of the lawfully elected President of Haiti because he won't kiss Bush's ass.

[Using the usual stooges at the UN as cover, the Bush regime gets some corrupt thugs, like Lula, the President of Brazil, and the government of China, to send occupation troops. When the Haitians fight back, they are called “gang members.” The occupation troops are called “peacekeepers.” And some fools on the U.S. left call the scum running Brazil and China “progressives.” George Orwell would have loved it. And hated it.]

Wanted For Murder: While Their Troops Kill Haitian Patriots, These UN Vultures Do “Fact Finding”



Members of the U.N. Security Council address the media at a hotel in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, April 16, 2005, concluding their four-day fact-finding trip.

From left are, Philippine U.N. Ambassador Lauro R. Baja, Tanzanian U.N. Ambassador Augustine P. Mahiga, Greece U.N. Ambassador Alexandra Papadopoulou, Romanian U.N. Ambassador Georghe Dumitru, China U.N. Ambassador Guangya Wang, Brazilian U.N. Ambassador Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, U.N. envoy to Haiti Juan Gabriel Valdes, Japan U.N. Ambassador Shinichi Kitaoka, Russian U.N. Ambassador Andrey I. Denisov, Denmark U.N. Ambassador Lars Faaborg Andersen and Argentina U.N. Ambassador Cesar Mayoral.

Brazil is leading the 7,000 U.N. peacekeeping **[translation: occupation]** force in Haiti. (AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

Bush Says His Privacy Must Be Protected; Won't Use E-mail

[THANKS TO B WHO E-MAILED THIS IN. B WRITES: So I guess he's not getting GI Special.]

WASHINGTON —President Bush said Thursday that the public should know as much as possible about government decision-making, **but** national security and personal privacy — including his — need to be protected.

"I believe in open government," Bush said at a meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. "I've always believed in open government. I don't e-mail, however. And there's a reason: I don't want you reading my personal stuff."

Bush once was a prolific e-mailer. *But he signed off from cyberspace just before taking office in 2001 after lawyers told him that his presidential e-mail communications would be subject to legal and archival requirements.*

Bush Wins War On Terrorism: Abolishes Terrorism Report

15 April 2005 By Jonathan S. Landay, Knight Ridder Newspapers, Washington

The State Department decided to stop publishing an annual report on international terrorism after the government's top terrorism center concluded that there were more terrorist attacks in 2004 than in any year since 1985, the first year the publication covered.

"Instead of dealing with the facts and dealing with them in an intelligent fashion, they try to hide their facts from the American public," charged Larry C. Johnson, a former CIA analyst and State Department terrorism expert who first disclosed the decision to eliminate the report in The Counterterrorism Blog, an online journal.

Received:

Seeking Iraq War Vets for Documentary

Sent: Friday, April 15, 2005 10:42 AM

Subject: Seeking Iraq War Vets for Documentry

Metropole Filmworx LLC is an independent film producer looking for soldiers to appear in an upcoming documentary about their experiences in Iraq.

If you have stories or experiences that would help people understand

What is happening to soldiers prior to deployment to Iraq

What is happening on the ground in Iraq

What is happening to soldiers and their families when they get back from Iraq

We would like to hear from you.

This is a non-partisan film. The only objective is to find out what is happening in Iraq from people who have actually served there.

Please email opencad2@yahoo.com if you might be interested in chatting with us. Provide your phone number and tell us a good time to call so we can contact you.

If you would like to send a photo of yourself or show us a picture of something you'd like to talk about, please do so. If you have a website, feel free to provide us with a link.

If you prefer, you can fax us on (310) 396-0667.

This movie has no agenda other than to let soldiers with important information communicate it to the rest of the country.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, Nancy Fulton

Info Request From Italy

From: "mario portanova 2" portanova@diario.it

To: GI Special

Sent: Friday, April 15, 2005 6:15 AM

Subject: info request from Italy

My name is Mario Portanova, I'm a journalist of Italian weekly magazine "Diario". I'm writing an article on what happened during Falluja battle last November.

I'm looking for direct witnesses of it. Did you publish some soldier's stories related to Falluja, the battle, the days before and after? Can you send me something?

I'd like to interview some soldiers who fought there, do you think you can help me?

Thank you for your kind attention, here you find my references.

Best regards

Mario Portanova
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portanova@diario.it
<http://www.diario.it>

1st Sgt. Waters

From: Ward Reilly
To: GI Special
Sent: Friday, April 15, 2005 9:28 AM
Subject: 1st Sgt. Waters

Good morning to you my friend...Tell the 1st Sgt. in question that obeying the Constitution and Bill of Rights was in HIS Commander In Chief's contract...and if the CIC doesn't follow the Constitution, that all other contracts for the troops he abuses are null and void.

Also tell 1st Sgt. Waters that he needs to carry his ass out of retirement, and go directly to Baghdad...they need him there desperately...

If ANY of the NG or Reservists had wanted to be active duty full-time soldiers, they wouldn't have joined the NG or Reserves.

Typical right-wing "pretzel logic."

Good comment T, and PEACE from an X-Grunt, Ward

[This is the item Brother Ward refers to:]

In a letter to Army Times, Retired 1st Sgt. J. Alan Waters, Copperas Cove, Texas wrote:

"I have a problem with people complaining about stop-loss and the call-up of the Individual Ready Reserve.

"Read your contract. You signed it.

"The military is not a scholarship to play Army and then go to college."

So, according to Waters, the following happens in the recruiting office:

“OK, and one more thing. If some criminal asshole in the White House starts a war for oil and Empire, lies about the real motives, and the invasion gets all fucked up, you can be forbidden to leave the Army for as long as the war lasts.

“You may have signed up here for X years in the Army, but that don’t matter at all. If the war goes on for 5 years, you can be kept in the Army for 5 years. If the war lasts 10 years or 20 years, it could be that you will NOT be allowed to leave the Army, or the battlefield, until the war is over, unless it’s feet first. There is no limit on how long you can be forced to remain in the army.

“If you try to leave, you can be arrested and imprisoned.

“We call that ‘stop-loss.’”

Sgt. Waters says that’s what soldiers knowingly signed up for at the recruiting station?

Bullshit.

T.

Received:

“Power To The Imagination”

From: Jordan
To: GI Special
Sent: April 15, 2005
Subject: power to the imagination!

I'm an avid reader of your newsletter, which I think is a great project and a courageous blow to the empire's politics of secrecy and planned exposure of details to keep us mystified.

Thank you very much for putting it out. I have a link to your website on mine, and I thought you might like to check it out.

There's a picture I made on the bottom of the web page you'll get a kick out of.

the website i made is <http://situationist.gq.nu>

tell me what you think; I dig the edge on the comments you often include in brackets, and think you'd appreciate it.

feel free to take whatever you want from the site and use it as you wish. although I am not the biggest fan of the socialist organizations you sometimes quote (i think they're a little too doctrinaire, too many illusions about ideology, hierarchy etc.) and am more into organizationless, spontaneous subversion, I'm surely one of the biggest fans of your

work, and hope we can accelerate the decomposition of this whole civilization and watch it crumble together.

anarchy and polyamory (since peace and love are commodified now)

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to contact@militaryproject.org. Name, I.D., withheld on request. Replies confidential.

Web Copies

For back issues see: GI Special web site at <http://www.militaryproject.org/> .

The following that we know of have also posted issues:

<http://www.notinourname.net/gi-special/>, www.williambowles.info/gispecial,
<http://www.albasrah.net/maqalat/english/gi-special.htm>

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